

Key West Sports Academy Team Handbook

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The Key West Sports Academy Mission

Our goal at The Key West Sports Academy is to develop each individual's gymnastic potential in a safe and enjoyable atmosphere.

Using specific gymnastics progressions and a highly trained gymnastics staff each gymnast will learn the correct fundamentals and basic skills which will equip the athlete with the knowledge and ability to progress.

As instructors we will use the sport of gymnastics to help every child gain greater self-confidence and a more positive self-image.

Team Philosophy

Our goal is to provide the mental and physical discipline needed for competition within a framework of positive reinforcement and encouragement. Learning to be comfortable in a competitive situation is a positive experience and adds to a child's development.

Welcome to the Team!

Key West Sports Academy would like to welcome your family to our club. If you are reading this team manual it is because your daughter has already impressed us with her gymnastics talent and potential. Through this team manual we hope to give you a better insight into how our program operates and answer many of your questions.

Welcome to the Team!

First, and most important, this club is all about providing a fantastic gymnastics experience to all its members. We are here for the young children, many who have hopes and dreams of being the best they can be in life and in this sport. We are here to support them in that dream.

To make that dream come alive the gymnast, parents, and coaches must function as a TEAM. Team for our purposes means:

Together
Everyone
Achieves
More!

You might have noticed that there is no "I" in TEAM. It does not mean that your child, as an individual or you as a parent, is not important, not at all! It simply means that the whole is stronger than the sum of its parts. If we all work together toward common goals we have a much greater chance of achieving something really significant with our program.

The purpose of this team manual is to give you a better idea of what our goals are and how we operate as a TEAM called KWSA.

If, after reading this manual, you have any questions about any aspect of the program please ASK! We would be happy to answer any question you may have.

Again, welcome to Key West Sports Academy. We are glad to have you as part of our TEAM.

Introduction

This team manual is designed to answer questions and explain the rules and policies for the competitive gymnastics program at Key West Sports Academy.

Competitive gymnastics is a unique sport requiring the support of the whole family in order for the gymnast to be successful.

You are to be congratulated because you are taking the time to think through the byproducts of team membership. Please direct any questions you may have to Coach Suzanne.

Why Gymnastics?

(Excerpt from article by David Day in Technique Magazine)

"Gymnastics is more than just another sport. It is an activity that offers something different to each participant. In gymnastics, highly active children can have a positive outlet for their energy while the less physically motivated can be encouraged to learn skills suited just for them.

Developmental gymnastics is composed of a myriad of skills so children of all abilities can enjoy the challenge of learning new and exciting skills. This variety provides an opportunity for successful experiences that motivate the child to strive to new heights. These experiences build the self-esteem and self-confidence needed to enjoy the many challenges of life.

Parents have observed their children cartwheel and tumble across the yard and the furniture for years. They see the abilities and fears of their children and initially place them in gymnastics classes for many reasons ranging from 'I've seen them at home and I think they are very talented' to 'I think my child lacks coordination and I want them to develop more strength.'

Whatever the reasons for starting gymnastics, (parents) enjoy seeing their children learn. The facial expressions tell the whole story - from the concentration when beginning a new skill, to the frustration when they realize it will take several tries, and then to the joy and excitement when they finally reach their goal.

Gymnastics allows children to be challenged by a multitude of sensory motor experiences that develop coordination, balance, flexibility and strength. The fact that participation in gymnastics is motivating and fun teaches students to enjoy physical activities - an attitude that will remain with them throughout life

Just as important as its many physical health benefits is the educational value of gymnastics. Gymnastics is composed of hundreds of skills that must be learned step by step. Students learn each skill by mastering each of its parts and piecing it together. This is the same learning process by which we learn difficult skills. The development of social skills, learning process skills, gaining self-confidence, and enjoying physical

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activity along with the development of the health and physical benefits make gymnastics the best possible activity for children of all ages.”

Men’s Fitness Magazine declared elite gymnastics the world’s toughest sport. It ranked elite gymnastics first among 40 different sports using various evaluation criteria such as fitness, skills and the intelligence required for success. They also stated that elite gymnasts are way off the scale compared to other athletes in overall fitness. “Gymnastics is a tremendous sport in its own right, but it also happens to be the best building block for enhanced skill development and participation in any sport... Participation in the sport of gymnastics can promote positive effects in the following areas: coordination, strength, kinesthetic awareness, flexibility and self-confidence.”

Gymnastics Goals

Does your daughter plan to make it to the Olympics, get a scholarship to college, or does she just enjoy the achievement of new skills and the companionship of other team members? Any of these may be valid reasons for joining the team, but it may be important to assess her goals in a shorter period, such as within the next six months to a year. We will ask every team member to biannually complete a goals worksheet to facilitate goal setting skills and the achievement of said goals.

In many instances there is no agreement what the actual goal is regarding the child's gymnastics experience. The father may say, *"I want her to be the best, win state championships!"* while the mother says, *"I just want her to enjoy herself"* and the gymnast says, *"I like to go to gym because my friends are there and we have a lot of fun working out."* Which goal should the coach follow? And what about the goals the coach has for the team/ individual athlete?

Gymnastics is a specialized sport that demands many hours of hard work and dedication. In this day and age teaching children to delay gratification for the attainment of a worthy ideal is a significant challenge. Everything they see and hear on television can be absorbed and internalized as “real life”. If a 30-second commercial can get us to buy a product, a 30-minute sitcom or drama will surely sell us a lifestyle.

The problem with television is that it condenses what in the real world takes years of hard work and dedication to achieve. Please understand if your daughter says she wants to be on a gymnastics team, or go for the gold at the Olympics, that's great, but it will take lots of hard work and dedication to make it there, on the part of both the athlete and the family. It certainly will not happen overnight.

Life Changes To Keep In Mind

- ★ At the lower team levels the number of hours of practice per week is relatively low. As your gymnast progresses up the competitive ladder the hours and days will continue to build, as will the costs.
- ★ You may have to rearrange your schedule so that you are available to drive your gymnast to and from practice every day (you may want to start a carpool with other team parents!).
- ★ Homework will have to be done much more efficiently and with better study habits due to shorter periods of time available. *(It has been our experience that most of our athletes tend to get good grades and are better at studying because they have learned to budget their time more effectively than their peers.)*
- ★ Time management skills will become a necessity in all areas of your child's life *(and yours)*. Every effort should be made to be present and on time every day.

The rest of this team manual will go over the various aspects of team participation. Please take the time to read this material carefully and discuss it with your family.

Description Of Team Levels

Bronze

An introduction to team. Referral is made by recreational coaches and/or parental inquiry with team coach approval. This is a noncompetitive level which follows the USAG level 1 requirements for advancement.

Silver

This level is a motivating environment for the up and coming gymnast. The focus is on creating a strong physical foundation for the skills necessary for competitive gymnastics. Gymnasts on the Silver pre competitive team are expected to master USAG level 2 routines and be proficient in USAG level 3 skills to be eligible to advance to Gold.

Gold Level 3

This is the introductory compulsory competition level. The focus is on learning how to compete and be a successful competitor while continuing to develop compulsory skills. This level may be by-passed at the discretion of the team coach.

Levels 4 & 5

These are compulsory competitive levels in which every athlete must compete and obtain a mobility score for advancement per USAG.

Level 6

Introductory optional competition level. is the entry level for Optional competition. The emphasis on this level is execution, artistic performance, and a development of basic optional skills; therefore this level is not evaluated on composition. Clubs may choose to develop a specific routine for all of their level 7's or each gymnast may perform an individualized routine. Competition is conducted at the local, sectional, and state levels.

Levels 7-10

Advanced optional level routines are developed and choreographed individually by the coaches for each gymnast's strength, style, and difficulty level.

COMPETITIVE PROGRAM POLICIES

One Month Trial Phase

- ★ All incoming competitive gymnasts will be interviewed and evaluated by the coaching staff concerning acceptance and placement in the competitive program.
- ★ After evaluation new competitive gymnasts may be able to enroll for a period of one month on a trial basis, and then be reevaluated at the end of the month concerning final acceptance.
- ★ Parents of potential team members will be informed of club policies and philosophies concerning the competitive program.

Team Guidelines

1. Gymnastics training is exclusive to this club. Gymnasts may not train at any other gym, camp, or clinic while competing and/or representing this facility without consent from the management.
2. Each gymnast is required to attend and be on time for all regularly scheduled practices. That means on the floor ready to go when practice begins and not talking or hanging around out front. If for some reason you will be late or absent you are required to call the office and notify the coaches. Tardiness will result in a conditioning only practice: if you are not on-time and warming up/ stretching with the group then you will not be properly prepared to practice and could risk injury. BE ON-TIME!
3. There are NO MAKE UP CLASSES, if a gymnast misses her practice she has already missed what was being taught to her level, attending the practice of another level or a noncompetitive program is detrimental to the gymnast as she will not be able to "catch up" on the missed learning, furthermore it would be detrimental the other athletes in the "make up classes" as they would not be receiving the instruction designed for them due to having an athlete of another level in their class.
4. Proper workout attire is necessary at all times. A properly fitting leotard is the only acceptable workout attire. Hair should be appropriately tied so as not to interfere in any way during practice. No jewelry of any kind may be worn during the workout. No shorts.
5. All gymnasts are required to cubby with the appropriate equipment as listed by the coaching staff. Cubbies must be kept clean and tidy, no food in cubbies!
6. Absolutely no food, drink, candy **or cell phones** are permitted on the workout floor. All snacks or meals must remain in the lobby area. Water bottles may be kept in gymnasts cubbies.
7. Gymnasts may not leave the workout or competition floor without the expressed permission of the coaching staff.

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8. Interaction between gymnast and parent (visually or orally) during workouts or at gymnastics competitions is **not appropriate**. A distracted gymnast is a prime candidate for injury. Contact the front desk or the coach first if you need to communicate with a gymnast on the workout floor or competitive site.
9. All gymnasts are expected to maintain the best physical condition possible. This includes eating healthy! Please stay away from fast foods and excessive "junk food"/sweets, especially soda!
10. All injuries, no matter how small, must be promptly reported to the coach. Injured athletes are required to attend practice. They will be assigned a modified workout, keeping within doctor's restrictions. Athletes who chose to not come to practice due to an injury may be dropped from the program, physical condition must be maintained throughout injuries to continue in competitive gymnastics.
11. No gymnast may be left at the facility unattended. When dropping off a team member please do so within a reasonable time frame. Please do not drop off any one more than ten minutes before the start of the scheduled practice and be prompt to pick them up at the conclusion.
12. Coaching technique and discipline are not subject to compromise with parents or gymnasts. The coaching staff has the final say in all competitive program matters, as they are ultimately responsible in the eyes of the law for each child's well being. If you have concerns the coaching staff would be happy to explain the reasoning behind techniques and disciplinary action.
13. All competitive gymnasts must demonstrate proficiency in all skills appropriate to their competitive level to be allowed to enter any competition. In addition, the gymnast must be in good health and have attended every workout for the two weeks prior to any competition. Special situations should be discussed well in advance of the competition with the coach.
14. As a member of this competitive program all gymnasts are required to attend and be actively involved in all gymnastic activities related to this facility. (i.e.: fundraising projects, exhibitions, meets , etc.)

The majority of this section has focused on the gym and competition; however, the coaching staff believes that **the order of importance always needs to be family, education, and then gymnastics**. If you choose to be a member of our program, we assume you have allowed appropriate time for family functions and that your child's study habits and schoolwork is of exemplary quality.

*We do not advocate the use of this statement as an excuse for coming late to workouts, missing practices, etc. As with all things in life, it is your responsibility to fulfill your commitments.

Communication

Rumor, innuendo, and just plain backstabbing tend to occur when there is a vacuum created by a lack of information - this is detrimental to the successful operation of any gymnastic facility. If you need or want to know any information please see the coaching staff (except during workout). Any of the above could be cause for dismissal from the program.

All questions regarding your child's progress, discipline , etc., may be discussed by appointment only with the coaching staff.

From time to time the coaches may have discussions in which they seek the opinion of team members and even parents. There may even be a vote, but it is opinion only - the coach has the final word on any decision that affects the competitive gymnastics program.

Termination Of Enrollment

Discipline and gymnastic technique are determined only by the coaching staff. Workouts are not for socializing; they are for skill development. Idle chatter and horseplay is not acceptable during workout.

The coaching staff has the right to suspend or ask a gymnast and/or parent to terminate enrollment due to continuous disciplinary problems, which impair the safety and progress of the other program participants, with **no refunds**.

COMPETITIVE PROGRAM - FINANCIAL POLICIES

Team is a year round commitment.

All payments are nonrefundable.

1. The tuition for the competitive program is determined on a yearly basis with gym closings and holidays taken in to account, tuition is scheduled to correlate accordingly throughout the year. (ex. There are no "make-up" practices due to holidays or gym closed dates). Tuition will not be prorated, refunded, or redirected. Once you commit to being a member of the competitive program, you commit to financially sustaining that program. Any gymnast who carries a balance over to the following month will not be permitted to participate

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in any gymnastics activities until their balance is brought current. Competitive program accounts must be current and paid in full to enable your gymnast to participate in the competitive season.

2. Notice of intent to cancel enrollment must be made in person, and reduced to writing at least one month prior to the gymnast's final workout. If you choose not to notify the office you will be charged for the month following your gymnasts' last workout.
3. There are no make-ups, discounts, or prorated accounts due to absence of any nature. This includes, but not limited to injuries, vacations, illnesses, etc. The competitive program is already greatly discounted in comparison to other gym programs and is in fact effectively subsidized by the class programs.
4. Meet expenses for all coaching fees (i.e.: gas, mileage, food, lodging, and session fees) must be shared by all gymnasts competing.

Parent Commitment

1. Make sure gymnast attends all regularly scheduled workouts, meets, and special functions.
2. Communicate with the coaches regarding any problems.
3. Check the bulletin board and email regularly to stay current with team activities.
4. Make sure we have a valid email address and that you are set up to receive emails from us.

Competitive Season Information

Medical Clearance

Each year your child will be required to have a physical and a letter stating his/her ability to participate from a physician. Your child will not be allowed to participate in our program without this letter on file.

USAG and AAU Fees

KWSA Teams compete in both the USAG and AAU competitive systems. USAG and AAU Competition begins at Level 3 and continues to Level 10.

USAG fees total \$50.00, the athlete registration form for USAG must be submitted along with payment. Athletes level 5 and higher will only compete in the USAG circuit.

KWSA currently competes in the Amateur Athletic Union's Florida Gold Coast gymnastics circuit during the spring and will continue to do so with newer athletes level 3 and 4. If your daughter is picked to compete AAU during the spring there is a mandatory \$30 registration fee.

KWSA Registration Form

KWSA's registration form along with its corresponding Team membership fee – currently \$35 – is due by September 1st of each year.

Meet Expenses

Each gymnast's family is responsible for paying their own meet fees. These fees will vary depending on the type of meet (*I.E. local qualifying meet, invitational or state meet*). Meet fees are generally between \$75 - \$125. Each gymnast is responsible for her own transportation to the competition, hotel (*if needed*), and all meals. Admission is charged to spectators at meets.

LATE FEES:

Many gym leagues have instituted a \$175 late fee per club plus \$25 per gymnast. If your fees are not paid on time this cost will be divided among those paying late!

Meet scheduling

At the beginning of each season (August or September), a preliminary schedule of meet locations and dates will be handed out to the gymnasts. Meets may be added, changed, or canceled.

Home Meets

Welcome to the Team!

We will try to have an in-house performance/ meet every year so that your families can attend without having to travel as far. Participants may or may not be judged and awarded scores/places.

Meet information sheet

1-2 weeks before a competition, participating gymnasts will receive a meet information sheet that includes dates, times, gymnasts & coaches attending, host hotel (if needed), phone numbers, a map, and web address when available. Gymnasts invited to a meet will be given only one notice. For your convenience, the Front Desk will also have a copy of the meet information. Pay careful attention to the information, in particular arrival time.

Arriving late to a meet could cause your child to be disqualified from participating in that meet.

This is a safety issue as insufficient warm-up time can cause injury and no one wants to assume that liability. It is not uncommon for host clubs to send out meet information late or make last minute changes. It is a good idea to clear the whole weekend of a meet on the chance there will be last minute changes that could conflict with your previous plans.

Meet Withdrawal Form

Written notification of your child's inability to compete in any scheduled competition must be submitted, in writing, immediately. Failure to do so will result in being entered into meets you were not intending on going thus losing your meet entry fee and being charged for all pertinent fees associated with that meet.

In most cases **meet entry fees are due months in advance** of the actual competition date and are non-refundable. Very rarely will we be able to obtain a refund, in most we will not. Therefore, knowing which meets you will not attend ahead of time will eliminate the confusion and the loss of non-refundable meet fees.

The Meet Takes How Long?

The average meet can take as little as 2 1/2 hours or as long as 5 hours.

Most competitions run in a format similar to the one listed below.

Open Warm Up – Usually a half-hour long. This time is for general stretching and getting equipment settings specific to the gymnast.

Traditional Timed Warm Up - Every gymnast warms up on each of the apparatus. This procedure can take from an hour to an hour and a half, depending on the number of gymnasts competing.

Capital or Modified Capital Cup is also known as "Warm-Up/Compete" format. This combines the above format where the athlete warms up on a specific event and readily competes at that event before moving on to the next event and so on.

March In – all the gymnasts line up and march in to the gym to be presented to the audience and judges. Usually the National Anthem is played. This takes about ten to fifteen minutes.

Competition – the gymnasts now actually compete and receive scores from the judges at each event. This may take an hour and a half to two hours to complete. Longer if it is an optional meet and one touch warm ups are necessary.

Awards – if the organization running the meet is on the ball you may only have to wait five to ten minutes before the awards are handed out. It has been known to take significantly longer to get the awards ready. Once they are prepared it can take from fifteen minutes to half an hour to hand out the awards. Are you sure you brought enough to read?

Gymnast Selection Criteria for Meets

All gymnasts do not go to every meet. Meets should be a positive experience and therefore gymnast selection is made very carefully. Coaches make the decision on who competes based on the following criteria:

1. **Eligibility** - Gymnast must have all necessary fees paid and be considered an active and eligible gymnast.
2. **Performance Level** - Mastery of skills is based on performance in workouts. A gymnast will not be sent to a meet unless she can perform ALL required skills as per compulsory and/or optional guidelines published by USA Gymnastics, KWSA Mobility Sheets and possibly specific state guidelines; this is a matter of safety.

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- Attendance** - Gymnasts missing an excessive number of practices may not be selected for competition. The same could be true for gymnasts that consistently arrive late or leave early from workouts. Arriving late and leaving early may seem insignificant at first glance, however, gymnasts leaving early miss strength training and as a result deficits in strength development occur. This makes itself known in skills requiring explosive repulsion and general endurance. Gymnasts arriving late to practice must either lose time on their event work or stretch, lost event work means that they will be behind for competition, lost stretch time means flexibility and endurance suffer. Deficits in flexibility shows in split leaps and several skills that demand a wide range of dynamic movement. Obviously, this gymnast's routines will be fair to average at best. The concept of **"it's not what you do, but how you do it"** is the overriding principle in making a determination whether a gymnast in this circumstance will compete. No coach would willingly send a gymnast into a competition knowing the gymnast is not prepared to do her best. The child would have an unsuccessful experience, which could shatter her self-confidence and ruin the competitive experience. Gymnasts must have perfect attendance FOR TWO WEEKS prior to a meet or they could be removed from competition. Please see coaches well in advance regarding extenuating circumstances. **Removal from a competition roster for any reason will be at the gymnast's expense. Refunds will not be issued under any circumstance.**
- Attitude** - A positive attitude and showing respect to coaches and teammates is important. Gymnasts must be emotionally ready for the competitive arena. An excessive show of emotion will result in dismissal from the competition and/or awards ceremony.

Participation in Scheduled Meets

All team gymnasts should compete in ALL meets to which they are invited unless they are sick or injured. Meets have different meanings and the training for each will differ accordingly. Some meets, the focus may only be on obtaining a **qualifying score** for the state championship meet, therefore, a coach may tone down the power and focus on higher quality execution.

Another meet might be used to **develop confidence** and the coach may allow the gymnast to attempt new skills while removing the worry of scoring high from the gymnast's mindset.

Mobility meets are set up for a gymnast to obtain a specific score so she can move to the next competitive level. The coach may not be focusing on awards in such a meet.

Finally, there is the meet that everyone hopes the coach and gymnast will pull out all the stops – **state championships**, where everyone hopes their efforts from the past year will make them a winner.

Moving from Level to Level

At the end of every competitive season, gymnasts will receive 2 copies of the appropriate **KWSA Mobility Sheet**. One copy is for the gymnast and one copy is to be signed and returned to KWSA. Mobility sheets will clearly list all the requirements necessary for movement to the next level. The final decision of placement rests solely with the coaching staff. You trust us with your child everyday they walk in the gym. Trust that we will do what is in their best interest.

Moving up from one level to the next is decided by the coaching staff based upon scores from the meet season, attendance at workouts, skill level, and the attitude of the gymnast. If necessary, the coaches will discuss the KWSA Mobility Sheet with the parent(s) before a final decision is made. This decision will be made in the best interest of the child. As a gymnast moves up, her responsibility to workout and to participate in scheduled meets increases.

Although one criterion used to advance gymnasts from one level to the next is meet scores, the scores alone does not qualify them to move to the next level.

Meet Etiquette for Gymnasts

The following guidelines will help each gymnast make competition a fun and successful experience.

- ★ Be friendly and use sportsmanlike conduct at all times.

Everybody has a unique way of experiencing gymnastics competition. Some people look for the fun in the experience; others are simply hoping to cope with their fears, while others are focused to the point of excluding everything else around them – including you! At times this may make it seem difficult to be friendly with some gymnasts at a meet. Just remember, everyone is doing the best they are capable of at that moment. When the opportunity presents itself, introduce yourself to the other gymnasts and coaches in your competitive rotation. Most of the time you will have the chance to develop some new relationships, however, when another

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gymnast is being given directions by her coach or preparing to compete, you must allow her time to concentrate without distraction.

- ★ Stay focused on the competition. Talking with parents, relatives, or friends is **inappropriate** during the meet.

Even with the best of intentions, relatives and friends may give advice that conflicts with what your coach says. What will you do when you receive advice from Mom that differs from what Dad told you, then the coach says something different? The answer is you will become more nervous and uptight because you do not know where to place your focus. During workouts and competition pay attention to the coach.

- ★ Before leaving the competition, notify the head coach.

Always let the coach know when you are going to leave the facility. You should never leave the competition facility without specific permission from the coach. You should always be accompanied by another team member or coach when leaving the competition floor.

- ★ There is absolutely no reason for you to be on any piece of gymnastics equipment unless you are warming up or currently competing.

If you are staying to watch another teammate compete, or you have arrived early for warm ups, stay seated in the bleachers do not to wander out onto the competition floor.

- ★ Competing gymnasts must stay in their rotation group sitting quietly until the last competitor has finished. Gymnasts are **NOT** dismissed until the last athlete is done competing in the whole meet. Encourage your athlete to be respectful of the other's efforts by watching them and applauding their efforts.
- ★ Gym bags, warm up suits, grips, and any other stuff you brought with you should be placed inside your gym bag and kept near you or under your chair.
- ★ **Warm ups should be worn when accepting awards.** They must be zipped up with **no sleeves or t-shirts hanging out.**
- ★ Hair must be up and out of the face for competition.

The meet is not complete until **ALL** the awards have been handed out. The other gymnasts have waited patiently to receive their awards and have applauded your efforts. You owe them the same consideration.

Win, Lose, or Wipeout

It is important to remember that a score for any routine is an evaluation of one single performance in your career as a gymnast, not a label you must live up to (*i.e. winning the all around this time means you must win it every time*), or hang around your neck for the rest of your life (*a 95th place ribbon for falling off the beam 20 times*). Each meet teaches you more about your abilities as a gymnast, competitor, and human being, and are necessary ingredients for success at higher levels of competition and life in general.

Meet Etiquette for Parents

1. Team Spirit is a big help.... Wear the team colors, or better yet one of our club T-shirts.
2. Remember, your gymnast is part of the KWSA team. She competes not only for herself but also her teammates, parents, coaches, and KWSA.
3. Please show proper respect to all Officials and Coaches at every competition. They are all there for one reason, to support your child's interest in gymnastics. **Under no circumstance should you attempt to contact any official on the competition floor during or after the meet (judges, score keepers, etc.)** If you have any questions regarding the meet or your child's scores you must contact your coach. Even the coach is not allowed to approach the judges regarding routines or scores during the meet, but must submit an inquiry through the Meet Director. Points could be deducted not only from your gymnast but the team score as well for failure to follow these rules.
4. Please show proper respect to all competitors. You **NEVER KNOW** who is sitting near you (I.E. parents of the gymnast you just made a remark about).

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5. Once a gymnast has walked into the competition area for warm-up, they **ARE NOT ALLOWED** to talk or have contact with their parents until the competition is over. This has less to do with control than it does with FOCUS. Any distraction could disturb the focus necessary to have a successful routine. The coach's job at the meet is to monitor the gymnast's condition and teach her to respond appropriately. If the gymnast is too excited, the coach calms her down. If the gymnast is too complacent, the coach pumps her up and motivates her to do her best. The emotional dynamic is fluid in a competition. An excellent vault score may cause a gymnast to be over-confident. A terrible bar routine may actually provide an educational moment. At these times the gymnast needs to focus on her coach's advice, not distractions from off the competitive floor. If you have any questions about what happens at a meet, talk to the coach after you have returned to the gym and you have had time to reflect.
6. In any competition, parents, friends, and relatives of the gymnast **ARE NOT ALLOWED** onto the competitive floor. **YOU MUST** remain in the spectator's area. This also includes other relatives and friends. Your child could be immediately scratched from the meet, by the meet director or her coach, if a parent is in the competitor's area.
7. In case of injury during warm-up or competition, **YOU MUST** stay in the spectator area until your coach flags you onto the floor.
8. **DO NOT** coach your child. Coaches should coach, everyone else should encourage. Injury may result from changing the gymnast's focus away from the coach's technique. Even the most helpful comment from you could have disastrous consequences.
9. **NO FLASH PHOTOGRAPHY** is permitted during a meet. The sudden flash of light could cause a gymnast to be injured. Check out your camera in advance. Many cameras come with an automatic flash that will go off if it detects low light levels. If you cannot manually disable this device, please do not take pictures during the competition.
10. On the day of competition your child should eat a well-balanced meal about three hours prior to the actual competition. This energy will carry them through the entire competition. If necessary, a gymnast may carry crackers, pieces of fruit, or energy bars to curb hunger. (I used to always have a Hershey Bar right before competition :-)
11. All gymnasts are expected to stay until the end of the awards ceremony whether they are receiving an award or not. They need to cheer all award recipients - especially their teammates.

Expectations

Problems occur when a parent expects too much from an athlete who is new to the competitive arena. (*New is defined as having only competed for two or three years.*) It takes a number of years of quality competition for a gymnast to develop the poise and grace to continuously take top honors in a gymnastics competition.

The key is to recognize when your child is working up to her potential. If she completes all her skills for the first time, without a fall, that is a winning routine regardless of what score she receives. Winning isn't just about coming in first. Comments from you should be congratulatory and positive. No mention should be made at that time of what she can do better, that would lessen the effect of this "victory" for her. The week after the meet your daughter's coach will go over those elements that need work and congratulate her on the elements she competed correctly.

Any score she receives during a competition is no reflection on you as parent. There is no reason for you to feel embarrassed if your child is having a bad meet. Everyone has good days and bad days, and it is how the she learns to react to them that contribute to her development as a competitor and as a person.

Remember always that a score given to your child in a gymnastics competition is an evaluation of one single performance, not an evaluation of the child.

Gym Bag Necessities

For Practice:

These items should be brought to every practice, non-food items may be kept at the gym in the gymnasts cubbie.

- ★ Uneven bar grips (\$65), wrist bands (\$5)
- ★ Extra Leotard
- ★ Water bottle
- ★ Hair care (hair ties, scrunchies, hairspray)
- ★ Personal hygiene items
- ★ Any vital medical braces, supports, or bandages
- ★ Fruit, crackers, or pretzels for snack break
- ★ Optional: gymnastics tape (\$3), underwrap (\$2), handtowel (especially when its hot), nail clippers or small scissors (for rips broken nails etc).

For Meets:

At the end of your last practice before leaving for a competition each gymnast must make sure the following items are in her gym bag:

- ★ Uneven bar grips, wrist bands
- ★ Team competition leotard
- ★ Team warm-up suit
- ★ Water bottle
- ★ Hair care items
- ★ Personal hygiene items
- ★ Any vital medical braces, supports, or bandages
- ★ Emergency phone numbers
- ★ Fruit, crackers, or a healthy snack for when the meet runs long
- ★ A copy of optional floor music (optional level gymnasts only)

Problem Resolution/ Clarification Form

To: _____ Date: _____

From: _____ Phone#: _____

I would like to talk to you about:

Please state the comment, idea, suggestion, problem, or concern as succinctly as possible in this area.

In my opinion:

(Check appropriate box and list at least 3 ways to address the situation presented above. Use the back of this sheet if you need more room to write.)

1.

2.

3.

No meeting is necessary.

I would like to meet with you.

This is only to be used if you feel a problem/conflict exists that needs our attention.

Glossary of gymnastic terms

AAU - American Athletic Union

ACTIVE - A gymnast in good standing who is current in payment of TEGA fees and Booster Club fees, and attends all regularly scheduled training sessions.

ALL AROUND SCORE - A gymnast's total score from all events (I.E. vault, bars, beam, and floor).

BOOSTER CLUB - A non-profit club involved in furthering the participation of young people in the sport of gymnastics and defraying the costs of the competitive gymnastics team at TEGA.

COMPULSORY ROUTINES - A series of skills on each event that are put together with clearly marked timing, amplitude, and body position. The USAG develops a set of routines for Levels 4, 5, 6. All gymnasts compete using the routines developed by USA Gymnastics.

ELIGIBLE - an active gymnast, current with USAG, club, and Booster fees, who, with coaches' approval, may participate in all activities including meets and exhibitions.

INACTIVE - A gymnast who has officially dropped or voluntarily chosen not to compete, or whose TEGA fees are 30 days delinquent.

INELIGIBLE - A gymnast who is not current with the Booster Club, TEGA fees, or USAG fees, has had some disciplinary problems, or is considered not ready by the coach.

INVITATIONAL MEET - A meet, usually with a specific theme, hosted by any gymnastics club. These may or may not be qualifying meets for state championships, but scores may usually be used to move a gymnast from one level to the next.

MOBILITY SCORE – The score needed to move from one competitive level to the next. For example, a score of 31.00 all round may be needed to move from Level 4 to Level 5. The mobility score should not be confused with a “qualifying score” even if they are numerically the same.

MOBILITY SKILL SHEET - A skill sheet listing all of the skills required at TEGA to move up to the next competitive level.

OPTIONAL ROUTINES - Routines developed and choreographed by the coaches for each gymnast to be used primarily in levels 7, 8, 9, 10, & Elite. The routines will be individualized for each gymnast's strength, style, and difficulty.

QUALIFYING MEET - A sanctioned meet where the scores are used to qualify for the State Meet. The number of meets actually scheduled will be determined by a gymnast's ability to successfully complete the appropriate level routines and receive the score necessary for state competition.

QUALIFYING SCORE – The all around score (total of vault, bars, beam, and floor) needed for entry into the state competition. Normally this score is determined by USA Gymnastics, but in some cases may be changed according to a particular state or region's needs.

STATE MEET - In most cases, the season finale, where qualified gymnasts compete with other gymnasts throughout the state. Higher level gymnasts may go on to compete in regional or national level competitions.

USAG - USA Gymnastics.

MEET WITHDRAWAL FORM

Per our rules and policies, written notification of your child's inability to compete in any scheduled competition must be submitted, in writing, immediately. Failure to do so will result in being entered into meets you were not intending on going thus losing your entry fee and being charged for all pertinent fees associated with that meet.

In most cases *meet entry fees are due months before* the actual meet date and are non- refundable. Very rarely we may be able to obtain a refund, in most we will not. Therefore, knowing which meets you will not attend ahead of time will eliminate the confusion and the loss of non- refundable meet fees.

GYMNAST'S NAME: _____

TEAM LEVEL: _____

MY DAUGHTER CANNOT COMPETE IN THE FOLLOWING MEET(S):

NAME OF MEET:

DATE OF MEET:

PARENT'S SIGNATURE: _____

DATE OF NOTIFICATION: _____

Please turn this form in to the Front Desk as soon as possible to avoid being entered into a meet you cannot attend (keep a copy for your records). Turning this form in DOES NOT guarantee you will not be entered into a meet unless it is done in a timely manner.

Parent / Gymnast Acknowledgement

Welcome to the Team!

I have read the document titled "Welcome to the Team!" from cover to cover and understand and agree to the guidelines set forth.

I also understand that the policies and procedures may change throughout the year. Modifications and additions to this document may be made through letters or communications from the Team Coach and / or Gym Director.

Should I have any questions regarding any policies or procedures, I understand that I should contact the Gym Director for the appropriate answers.

Parent Signature Date

Gymnast Signature Date